

## **Chapter 2**

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

#### **A. Eligibility for Benefit Programs**

Refugees are entitled to apply for the same benefits and service programs that are available to U.S. citizens. If they meet the financial and non-financial requirements of those programs, they are eligible for TANF, Medicaid and FAMIS, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, Energy Assistance Program, General Relief Program, and any other benefit program offered through the Department of Social Service.

1. The process to determine a refugee's eligibility for any of the public assistance programs begins when the refugee applies for benefits at the local Department of Social Service (DSS).
2. The refugee completes the "Application for Benefits" (#032-03-824) which is available at the local DSS or on the web at <http://www.dss.state.va.gov/benefit/TANF/index.cgi#forms>
3. Refugees who do not meet TANF, Medicaid, or FAMIS requirements, may be eligible for time limited refugee cash assistance and refugee medical assistance. The rules for these programs are contained in Chapters 3 and 4 of this manual.
4. When a refugee obtains legal permanent residency status, eligibility for TANF, Medicaid, SNAP, RCA and RMA does not change.

#### **B. TANF Work Requirements**

A refugee, who is receiving TANF and is not exempt from the TANF work requirements, must participate in the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW). Participation in the Refugee Social Services Employment Program (described in Chapter 5) is not a TANF work requirement exemption.

#### **C. Eligibility for Foster Care Services**

Children in the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program (URM) are eligible to receive the full range of services and benefits to which children in Virginia Foster Care Program are entitled. The Medicaid eligibility determination process and procedures for children in the URM program are the same as for all other foster care children.